



WEEKLY NEWS LETTER

THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL OF THE A. F. of L., BY INSTRUCTION OF ST. LOUIS CONVENTION, DIRECTED THE OFFICERS AT HEADQUARTERS TO FURNISH A WEEKLY NEWS LETTER, FREE OF COST, TO ALL OFFICIAL LABOR PUBLICATIONS.

Containing a brief summary of important matters, affecting labor, occurring in the industrial, legislative and judicial fields, and such other information that will further the development and progress of the trade union movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

HEADQUARTERS

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No. 53.

GREAT BRITAIN'S COAL STRIKE

Washington, April 6.--A cable dispatch from London credits Thomas Ashton, Secretary of the Miners' Federation, with the following assertion: "It will be peace with honor and the men will return to work." The dispatch further states that Albert Stanley, Secretary of the Midlands Miners' Federation, and member of the house of commons, practically announced the end of the national coal strike by advising the miners of the Cannock Chase district, who have voted against the resumption of work, to return to the pits without delay, and they have returned to work. It is further reported that the vote against returning was 189,623 and in favor of return 157,107. Mr. Stanley stated that it was now impossible to secure the necessary two-thirds majority to remain out, and as a consequence resumption will ensue.

AGAINST TOBACCO COUPONS

Washington, April 6.--Congressman Mott of New York has introduced a bill which prohibits tobacco manufacturers from packing or attaching to their product, be it snuff, cigars, fine cut chewing tobacco or cigarettes, any sort of coupon or label offering a gift, premium or prize. The congressman states that independent cigar dealers and manufacturers all over the country are urging the passage of the measure. "There was a time", he continued, "when a man could enter the tobacco business with the hope of some day owning a store, but the big organization which controls so much of this business now has a way of swallowing up the retailers, and the best a young man can hope for is a job managing one of the trust's retail stores."

ENGINEERS FAVOR STRIKE

Washington, April 6.--Officials of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers have announced that the balloting of the engineers on the fifty eastern railroads to determine whether the engineers will strike, if necessary, to support their demands for increased wages, is proceeding rapidly, and that the ballots received so far indicate that the men are in favor of striking.

Musicians at Carbondale, Pa., after three days' strike, secured increase from \$10 to \$15 per week.

HOUSE PASSES CHILDREN'S BUREAU BILL

Washington, April 6.--Only recently the senate passed the children's bureau bill. A similar bill was also introduced in the house and referred to the house labor committee. The house labor committee reported the bill favorably and it has passed by a vote of 173 to 17. The bill, as passed in the house, only differs in one particular from that passed in the senate. The senate bill provides \$1,440 per year as the salary of messenger, while the house bill conforms to the statutory salary of \$640. The provision in the house bill regarding this difference will likely be accepted by the senate, and then the bill will go to the president for his signature. In all probability the president will sign the bill. The purpose of the bureau which is about to be created, after long years of agitation, is to investigate and report upon the question of infant mortality, orphanage, juvenile courts, accidents, diseases of children, and the employment of children, and is for the further purpose of suggesting legislation affecting children in the several states. In fact, the bureau will be empowered to make inquiries and submit reports on every phase of child life. Congressman Wilson, chairman of the house labor committee, had charge of the bill on the floor of the house during the discussion incident to its passage.

EXPRESS BILL REPORTED

Washington, April 6.--The house committee on interstate commerce has favorably reported to the house the Adamson bill providing for drastic regulation of rates of express companies and placing such companies under the jurisdiction of the interstate commerce commission. The bill provides that hereafter express companies must assess rates on packages not exceeding eleven pounds in weight according to the zone system, the lower rate applying to the shorter hauls. The maximum rates are fixed at two cents per pound for packages traveling 400 miles; four cents per pound under 600 miles; five cents per pound under 800 miles; seven cents per pound under 1200 miles; ten cents per pound under 2000 miles and twelve cents a pound for any distance greater than 2000 miles.

JUDICIAL RECALL

Washington, April 6.--Congressman Taylor of Colorado has introduced a bill in the house for the recall of federal judges whose official acts do not meet with public favor. The Taylor bill provides that federal judges may be recalled every four years in the event they are guilty of misconduct in office. It is provided that the recall vote is to be taken, when necessary, at the quadrennial election, and those entitled to vote for the recall of a judge are those residing in the territory which the court circuit embraces. A separate provision entitles the voters, if they wish, to suggest the name of a proper successor.

CENTRAL BODY AGAINST I. W. W.

Lowell, Mass., April 6.--The Central Trades and Labor Council of this city has just passed a resolution condemning the I. W. W., and urging the wage workers of this city to refrain from allying themselves with an organization. "Whose whole policy since its inception has been a persistent effort to destroy the legitimate trade union movement."

CARMEN UP AGAINST FIGHT

Washington, April 6.--The Brotherhood of Railway Carmen has organized local unions at almost every point of the Great Northern railroad. The company, upon learning that these unions had been organized, issued a circular letter, stating to the members of the Carmen's union that they must either leave their organization or be discharged. An effort was made to secure a conference with the officials, but the representative of the Carmen was refused admittance to the conference, although the state commissioner of labor and the president of the State Federation of Minnesota were given an audience. These latter officials, however, were informed that the company would only deal with the Carmen and Trackmen as individuals. Owing to the stand of the company, complaints have been filed and warrants issued for the arrest of some of the officials of the Great Northern. These officials have been arrested under the anti-blacklisting laws and a trial of the case will shortly be had. In the meantime a number of the men have been discharged.

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

Washington, April 6.--Congressman Stitzer of New York has introduced a corrected bill for the creation of a department of labor. The reconstructed bill is acceptable to all those interested in the creation of this new department. It is provided that the new department to be created will be headed by a cabinet officer known as the secretary of labor and will be separate from the present department known as the department of commerce and labor. This bill has been referred to the labor committee and undoubtedly will be favorably reported to the house in a short time.

SOUTHERN CONFERENCE TO MEET

Washington, April 6.--The southern conference on women and child labor will meet in Chattanooga, Tenn., April 23, next. This conference is the outgrowth of a number of persons, comprising manufacturers, workmen and women, factory inspectors, club women and others interested in the welfare of women and children employed in mills and factories. The primary purpose of the organization is to secure uniform and adequate laws in the southern states for the protection of working women and children.

VAST PROFITS EARNED

Washington, April 6.--It has been shown through evidence produced before the Stanley house investigating committee, having under consideration the steel trust, that the railroad companies subsidiary to that corporation have returned dividends to the amount of 240%.

PATTERNMAKERS' STRIKE

Portland, Ore. April 6.--The patternmakers employed by the job shops of this city are on strike for the eight-hour day. This strike is part of the plan to establish the eight-hour day in the metal trades along the Pacific coast.

TO REGULATE MARINE BAND

Washington, April 6.--Junkets of the world-famous Marine band will be curtailed if a bill passes congress which will be reported shortly by the house labor committee. "The band has received \$37,000 for private recitals during the last year, and it is considered unfair for them to take money for their work when their entire expenses are paid by the government," said Chairman Wilson, coal miner, of the house labor committee.

TEN HOUR BILL PASSES

Washington, April 6.--The upper branch of the Maryland State Legislature has passed the ten-hour bill for working women without a vote in opposition. This bill had already passed the lower house and now goes to the governor for his signature. Many attempts were made to add amendments to the bill in the senate, but all were voted down, making the bill a straight ten-hour measure.

TWIST MEANING OF LAW

Minneapolis, Minn., April 6.--The assistant city attorney has given an opinion that the state law limiting the hours of labor for women wage earners to 58 hours per week does not apply to steam laundries. In the opinion he holds that "a laundry is neither a workshop, a manufacturing or mechanical establishment." This incident is but an added reason why people generally are severely criticising courts and lawyers.

COMPENSATION BILL PASSED

Washington, April 6.--The special session of the legislature which was called by Governor Osborne of Michigan has passed the employers' liability and workmen's compensation act, endorsed by the labor organizations of the state. The bill has been signed by the governor. Only two dissenting votes were recorded against the bill.

UNION MAN FOR CONGRESS

Washington, April 6.--It is reported from Wilkes-Barre, Pa., that John J. Casey, general organizer for the United Plumbers, Gas and Steam Fitters' Union, and a member of the lower house of the Pennsylvania legislature at its 1907 session, has announced himself as a candidate for congress in the eleventh district.

RECOMMENDS EXTENSION

Washington, April 6.--In a special recommendation to congress Postmaster General Hitchcock urges immediate extension to rural letter carriers who may be injured in the line of duty the same privilege and compensation as now provided by law for injured railway mail clerks.

Carpenters at Meridian, Miss., have secured eight hour day, without strike.

Carpenters at Silversprings, N. Y., have secured nine hour day without strike.

MINISTERS AFTER MINIMUM WAGE

Washington, April 6.--Lay delegates of the New Jersey Methodist Episcopal conference, in session at Asbury Park, New Jersey, took what is considered the most radical action in the history of the church, when they instructed their delegates to the general conference to vote in favor of uniform salaries for pastors. It is planned to have all the congregations contribute to a central fund, from which each pastor will be paid the same salary. It will be noted that labor organizations are not the only agencies engaged in endeavoring to gain and maintain a living wage.

HEALTH CONGRESS TO MEET

Washington, April 6.--A movement for the standardization of hygienic methods throughout the world will be inaugurated at the international congress on hygiene and democracy which meets in this city next September, in response to the invitation of the president and congress. This will be the first time in the sixty years of its existence that this body has met in the United States, although fourteen other congresses have been held in various parts of Europe. Between 6,000 and 7,000 American delegates are expected to participate in the deliberations of the coming congress.

LARGE FACTORY OUTPUT

Washington, April 6.--It is estimated by the department of commerce and labor that the value of the annual output of American factories reaches a total of \$20,000,000,000, having doubled in the last ten years. Germany is credited with being the greatest rival United States has in the commerce of the world.

LAWRENCE PROBE DROPPED

Washington, April 6.--The rules committee of the house has decided to drop its investigation of the strike of the textile workers at Lawrence, Mass. The reason assigned is that the strike is practically settled, and that the bureau of labor has already made an investigation. The bureau's report has not yet been made public.

WORKMEN IN MANUFACTURING INDUSTRIES

Washington, April 6.--The census bureau, in a statement just issued says that the manufacturing industries of the United States employed as wage earners 6,615,046 persons, or about 14 1/2% of the total population. The number of wage earners has increased 40.4% since 1899.

ADVOCATE REDUCED HOURS FOR CONVICTS

Washington, April 6.--News coming from Minnesota is to the effect that trade unionists will demand that the next state legislature adopt a law restricting the hours of labor in the state prison at Stillwater to eight hours per day.

Unions of painters, plumbers, machinists and teamsters have recently been organized at Petaluma, Cal.

WOMEN FOR CHAUFFEURS

Washington, April 6.--A story comes from Chicago that a number of women are now preparing to pass city examinations as chauffeurs, and are to be employed by one of the largest taxi-cab companies in the city. There seems to be a desire by employers in every line of business to supplant men with women. Whether this latest innovation will prove successful, of course, remains to be seen. It is apprehended, however, that the women's clubs and other kindred organizations will start an active campaign against the employment of women in this class of labor.

CORRECTED RECORD

Washington, April 6.--Officially corrected figures of the battleship Florida's high-speed run over the Rockland, Me., course are given as 21.954 knots as the average of the five runs. This is a remarkable record, but does not make the Florida the fastest battleship in the world. The first record given out, 22.54, would have made the Florida the fastest battleship afloat. Only one other vessel, however, in the world exceeds this speed, it being the battleship Vanguard of the British navy, with a speed of 22.4 over a measured course.

MOVEMENT IN BETTER SHAPE

Washington, April 6.--It is reported to headquarters by the local organizer at Lead, S. D., that the movement in that city, which has been torn asunder by the difficulties existing between the miners and the operators, is on the up-grade. It is stated that the business men who have been favoring the unfair mining companies are beginning to realize that their interests are being seriously affected by their attitude toward union men, and it is predicted that a revival of union interest is at hand.

MATCH BILL PASSED

Washington, April 6.--After a warm debate in the house the bill, fathered by Congressman Hughes of New Jersey, which imposes a prohibitive tax on phosphorous matches in the United States, passed by a vote of 163 to 30. Besides imposing a prohibitive tax, heavy fines and penalties are provided for violators of the law. The importation of phosphorous matches is also forbidden. The primary reason for the enactment of the bill is that workmen contract an incurable disease known as "phossy-jaw" in the manufacture of phosphorous matches.

BUTCHER WORKMEN GROWING

Washington, April 6.--A communication received at headquarters from the Amalgamated Meat Cutters and Butcher Workmen is to the effect that the organization is gaining in membership. This international union has had a hard struggle, but its officials have been persistent and untiring in their efforts to build up an effective union. It is anticipated that the coming year will witness a large increase in membership.

Printers at Springfield, Mass., have obtained an increase in wages without strike.

ENGINEERS' STRIKE

London, April 6.--A strike is on against a firm at Birkenhead to enforce a demand for a raise in wages of the engineers, about 2,000 men being affected.

LONDON PLUMBERS

London, April 6.--There is an active effort being made to unite the various plumbers' associations in this city. Up to the present time there has been numerous sectional societies, but these organizations are beginning to actively discuss the amalgamation of all into one organization, and no doubt this will be accomplished. Active members in all of the organizations involved realize the importance of such a move.

WOOLCOMBERS GET INCREASE

London, April 6.--Bradford woolcombers have been granted an increase in wages. Those earning 51 a week will get 1s increase, and those under 51 will get 1d. About a year ago 1,000 operatives struck for the advance which has now come into effect.

FOR GENERAL MINIMUM WAGE

London, April 6.--The Sheffield railway workers have adopted resolutions demanding that if the government legislates upon a minimum wage the labor party shall not support any measure which does not guarantee a minimum wage for all workers.

FRANCE PASSES EIGHT HOUR-LAW

Paris, April 6.--A bill providing for an eight-hour day has been passed by the chamber of deputies. This action, it is believed, will have the effect of forestalling a general coal strike.

LABOR MAN DEAD

Houston, Texas, April 6.--James E. Grimes, at one time a member of the legislative committee of the American Federation of Labor, and widely known as an organizer and writer, is dead in this city.

MINIMUM WAGE BILL PASSES

London, April 6.--The government's minimum wage bill has been passed by parliament. Immediately after its passage Premier Asquith issued an appeal to the miners to accept the minimum wage bill as, he stated, it would effect largely what they asked for.

TO INVESTIGATE DIFFERENCES

Washington, April 6.--Senator Watson of West Virginia has introduced a joint resolution into the senate providing for the appointment of a committee to investigate the differences in the dispute between the coal operators and coal miners, and to report its findings, with recommendations, to congress.

UNION SHOP DEBATE

Omaha, April 6.--The South Omaha high school debating team won from the Fremont high school recently, before an audience that was engrossed with the question of the union shop vs. open shop, as discussed by the contestants. The question, "Resolved, That the movement of organized labor for the union shop should receive the support of public opinion" was handled by the affirmative in a manner which bespoke thorough preparation and knowledge of the trade union movement. Much ability was shown by both the affirmative and negative sides, but the affirmative won, not only by a preponderance of argument, but because it presented the subject in its true economic light.

TAXI-CAB DRIVERS WIN

London, April 6.--As a sequel to the strike of London taxi-cab drivers, who returned to work on the promise that their grievances would be inquired into, the award has just been issued which proved that the men were right in promulgating their various demands. A court of arbitration has decided that private fares remain the same as at present, the "extras" falling to the drivers, and that the drivers' proportion of the fares should be 25 per cent, and that no station charges should be allowed by the employers. The drivers are well satisfied with the award.

ENGLAND'S MUNICIPAL WORKERS

London, April 6.--Throughout the cities in Great Britain where public utilities are owned and operated by municipalities, there has been a general agitation by the employees for an increase in wages. Many cities have increased the wages as a result of this agitation. There is now serious impending trouble in Manchester, where 2s per week advance is being demanded. At present 25s a week is being paid. The advance has been refused and a strike is threatened.

UNREST IN COTTON TRADE

London, April 6.--There is great unrest in the Lancashire cotton mills, due to the fact that trade has been booming and wages have remained almost stationary, with the cost of living steadily advancing. A number of advances have been received either by strikes or threats of strikes, but in numerous places employers are insisting on a greater amount of labor for the same money, and as a consequence the restlessness of the operatives is increasing.

RAILWAY CLERKS' WAGES

London, April 6.--Railway clerks are receiving a miserly wage. Those receiving 20s a week are considered by the railway company managers as being well paid. The Railway Clerks' Association, owing to the small wages paid, has been able to increase its membership at the rate of 500 to 700 a month. It is stated that the average salary of 10,000 railway clerks is £1 13s 2½d per week.

Journeymen tailors recently formed a union at Phoenix, Arizona.

BATTLE FOR I. & R. WON

Columbus, O., April 6.--The following is the comment of Herbert S. Bigelow, leader of the progressive forces in the constitutional convention, anent the initiative and referendum proposal: "The initiative and referendum cause has won. The fifteen years' war is ended. Of course there comes the vote at the polls, but that will not be a battle; it will be a celebration. We shall then celebrate the establishment in Ohio of real popular government. The proposal which passed is as good as that of any yet adopted in America. It is more liberal even than the Oregon law, which has served for ten years as the model. With this machinery of direct legislation, the politicians will be helpless in the hands of the people. The corporation lobby, with its blighting influence, will pass away. Public interest will take the place of apathy. Patriotism will have a new meaning. The citizen will be a sovereign."

CLEVELAND ELECTRICIANS RETURN

Washington, April 6.--It is reported from Cleveland that Local No. 28, electricians, which organization has been standing loyally by the paid faction of the Electrical Workers, has returned to the regular organization, as the result of the decision recently handed down by Judge Phillips, declaring that the organization headed by McNulty was the regular one.

UNION MAN PRESIDENT OF COUNCIL

Seattle, April 6.--Robert B. Hesketh, a prominent labor man of this city, also a member of the city council, has been elected president of that body. Mr. Hesketh is recognized as not only a man of ability, but forceful and active in all affairs where the interests of organized labor are involved.

LABOR MAN RELEASED

London, April 6.--Tom Mann, the widely known labor man, who was arrested some time ago, has been released on \$2,000 bail. Mann is alleged to have been feloniously inducing traitorous practices in public speeches, and cable dispatches state that he was compelled to sign a guarantee that pending his trial he would not repeat his former utterances.

EXPRESS RATES TO BE REDUCED

Washington, April 6.--It is stated that the Interstate Commerce Commission and the express companies have practically reached an agreement whereby a number of changes are to be affected. Extension of delivery limits in cities is one of the features, but perhaps the most important is a reduction of the present rates.

PLUMBERS GET HALF HOLIDAY

St. Paul, April 6.--The Plumbers' union of this city has just secured an agreement from the master plumbers whereby the Saturday half holiday will shortly be inaugurated.

EFFECTIVE ADDRESS BEFORE AMERICAN ACADEMY

Washington, April 6.--President Gompers, in addressing the American Academy of Political and Social Science at Philadelphia, enlivened the proceedings by his strong indictment of the United States Steel corporation. He said in part: "Today the United States Steel corporation is practically safe from inconvenience from the organized labor movement. It has peace in its camps, but it is the sort of peace to which the Czar of Russia referred when he said, 'Peace reigns in Russia'. You are lulling yourself into fancied security. Some day you will wake up and find that it has been either a dream or a nightmare. You have crushed out the spirit of labor organization in some of your plants. By direct methods you have opened the channel of immigration to your plants and the American workers are there no longer. They are docile - they do your bidding without evasion. You think you are safe. So did the proprietors of the textile mills of Lawrence, and so do many other employers." The academy contains in its membership the leading thinkers of the day, and President Gompers created an intense situation by his remarks.

UNITED MINE WORKERS' STRIKE

Washington, April 6.--As predicted, a general suspension has taken place in the organized coal mining sections of the country. Approximately 700,000 men are out. In some instances miners have returned to work agreeable to arrangements made by the officials, pending an adjudication of the strike as a whole. In the bituminous central competitive field, comprising Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana and Illinois, a compromise agreement has been submitted to a referendum vote of the miners, and it is not known at this time what the result will be. In the anthracite field no settlement has been reached, but a conference is scheduled between the operators and miners for April 10, and it is believed that some sort of a compromise agreement will be reached.

MATCH BILL PASSES

Washington, April 6.--The senate, on April 3, passed the Esch-Hughes phosphorous match bill. This bill, in effect, taxes the manufacture of phosphorous matches out of existence. The law will require the use of harmless chemicals in place of the deadly phosphorous which has been used because it is a little cheaper. "Phosy-jaw" among match factory workers, the most loathsome of all occupational diseases, will now be prevented in America. Such action was taken long ago in Europe. This bill has already passed the house and now goes to the president for his signature. There is no doubt but that he will sign it, and thus another humane measure has been secured by organized labor, acting jointly with other humanitarian organizations.

CHICAGO CARPENTERS STRIKE

Chicago, April 6.--Fourteen thousand carpenters of this city are on strike. The carpenters are demanding 65¢ an hour, an increase of 5¢. Building operations in Cook county will be practically stopped until a settlement is reached.